

# **Exhibit 26**

**DECLARATION OF GRACE PALLADINO**

GRACE PALLADINO, declares, under penalty of perjury pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, that the following is true and correct:

1. I am a resident of the City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
2. I voted in the 2016 general election in my district: Ward 36, Division 38.
3. I have a master's degree and teach American history and government for the City of Philadelphia public school district.
4. As described below, I volunteered my time to help other voters file affidavits requesting a recount in the City.
5. I submit this declaration to explain the problems I and my fellow organizers encountered in Philadelphia with efforts to request a recount of votes in the City.
6. Starting in mid-November, I began to try to determine the process for voters to request a recount in Philadelphia. I contacted the Board of Elections, City Commissioners, and other City employees and elected officials. I also researched state and city websites for information about the process. And I contacted the Committee of 70, a nonprofit nonpartisan organization that provides election information.
7. I found that it was very difficult to obtain correct information. For example, I was first told that the law required three voters per county to request a recount and then I was informed that it was three voters per voting division. I also found that the most recent information on the state government website with deadlines for a recount was from 2014. This meant that all the specific dates provided on the website were incorrect. Different offices

provided me with different deadlines and procedures so that it became impossible to determine what I, as a voter, should do to request a recount.

8. The one consistent piece of information I received over and over was that a City-wide recount would be very hard and it had never been done before.

9. By the time I finally determined what were the correct procedures, the necessary forms, and the deadlines, it was the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and there was almost no time to educate and inform other voters of their rights.

10. I took a day off from work on Monday November 28, 2016 and arrived at City Hall at 7:00 am with my affidavit and to volunteer my time that day to help other voters. I remained at City Hall until 6:00 pm that day. I was not able to find any other voters from my Division before I went to City Hall or while I was at City Hall on November 28. Consequently, I was not able to file my petition for a recount.

11. Initially, on November 28 at City Hall, I was cautioned by Fred Voigt who I believe is an attorney for the Board of Elections that a citizen driven petition for a recount would be very difficult and useless. Later that day, a City Commissioner incorrectly told me that voters would have to pay a \$50 fee to file petitions. I explained to him, even though I am not an attorney, that there was no fee required.

12. Early in the day, employees at the Board gave out incorrect information about how many days after the vote certification recount affidavits could be filed. I was informed initially that November 28 was the deadline and then learned later in the day that the deadline was Wednesday November 30 – much too late to inform other voters that they could bring petitions to City Hall after November 28.

13. During Monday November 28, I observed the difficulties many voters had trying to comply with the byzantine process imposed in the City of Philadelphia. One 80-year-old woman walked 12 blocks from her assisted living facility to a Kinkos to print out an affidavit, then walked to a bank to obtain a notary, and then walked to City Hall to submit her petition. Unfortunately we had to tell her that since her affidavit was the only one from her Division, it did not meet the minimum requirement of three affidavits. We held her affidavit for her in case we could find two more affiants, but we were never able to find matches for her. She offered to go back to her building and try to find neighbors who could sign affidavits, but since her single polling place had two Divisions within it, she did not know, and we did not know, which of her neighbors were in her specific Division.

14. In several instances during the day on November 28, voters brought in the requisite three affidavits from their Division but the forms were incorrectly notarized. There was not enough time for them to reassemble the two additional voters to re-sign and notarize the necessary forms.

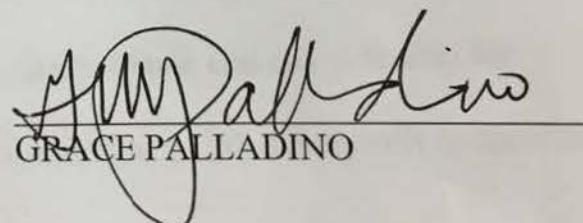
15. I also observed throughout the process that very few voters from low-income minority areas of the City came to City Hall with affidavits. Based on my experience as a City resident and public school teacher, I believe the cost for voters to file petitions for a recount placed an undue burden on people who are elderly, disabled, or low income. They would have to travel a distance to find a notary, especially if they live in a low-income neighborhood that does not have bank branches. They may not have sufficient funds to pay for a babysitter if they have children or to take unpaid time off of work to go to a notary and then to the Board of Elections office at City Hall. And they may not have the money to pay a notary fee.

16. Since the sample petition forms were only available on-line through the volunteer efforts I helped with, voters had to print out the forms themselves. If they did not have their own printer at home, they had to go to a store and pay a per page printing fee.

17. For voters who overcame all these hurdles and went to City Hall on November 28 only to find out that the notary signature was on the wrong page or one of their affiants was in an adjacent Division or a form was missing from their package, there was simply not enough time for them start the process over and return to City Hall.

18. I teach my students about the principles of democracy, the American election system, and the importance of participating as a voter. I believe that all voters should have access to accurate information about their right to vote and should be able to exercise that fundamental right without undue burden or artificial barriers that serve only to render the process futile. I provide this declaration in support of the voters of the City of Philadelphia and the efforts to create a more transparent and accountable election system in Pennsylvania.

Dated: December 4, 2016  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Grace Palladino